

A WIRELESS CAMERA SUPERVISION ROBOT (CSR-BOT) FOR
THE CYLINDRICAL PIPES AND CABLES SURFACES OBSERVATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION	PAGE
TITLE	i
DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
ABSTRACT	vi
ABSTRAK	vii
CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xix
LIST OF APPENDIXES	xx
 CHAPTER 1	
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the study	1
1.3 Problem Statement	3
1.4 Objective of the study	4
1.5 Scope of the Project	5
1.6 Thesis Structure	7
 CHAPTER 2	
LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 Overhead Line Tower Types	8
2.3 Conductor for Overhead power lines	11

2.4	Swing Conductors	13
2.5	Conductor Vibration	16
2.6	Conductor Corrosion Damage	18
2.7	Previous Research	20

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY 26

3.1	Introduction	26
3.2	Membrane materials	26
3.3	Development of the CSR-BOT	28
3.4	Step of Mechanical Design for a CSR-BOT	28
3.4.1	The Structure Design for the CSR-BOT	29
3.4.2	The Details Specification of the CSR-BOT	32
3.4.3	Type of motor used for the CSR-BOT	33
3.5	System Architecture	35
3.6	Electrical Control System of CSR-BOT	38
3.6.1	Electrical Schematic Diagram for Remote control	38
3.6.2	Electrical Schematic Diagram for Robot	42
3.7	Software development for CSR-BOT	46
3.7.1	Setup Address for Xbee Module by using X-CTU software	46
3.7.2	Programming for CSR-BOT	52
I.	Programming for Remote Control by using Arduino IDE software	55
II.	Programming for Robot by using Arduino IDE software	61

3.7.3	GUI- Interface for CSR-BOT	64
I.	Programming for Recording and Capturing Image by using Matlab Software	67
II.	Programming for Image Viewer by using Matlab Software.	72

CHAPTER 4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION 77

4.1	Introduction	77
4.2	Results for Performance of the CSR-BOT	77
4.2.1	Result for Remote Control Functionality	79
4.2.2	Result for the CSR-BOT functionality	83
4.3	Results of Effectiveness GUI-Interface for the CSR-BOT	86
4.3.1	Result for GUI-Interface for the CSR-BOT functionality	86
4.3.2	Result for Image Viewer for the CSR-BOT	92
4.4	Analysis for the CSR-BOT	98
4.4.1	Weight of the CSR-BOT	98
4.4.2	Torque calculation	101
4.4.3	Range test	104
4.4.4	Transmitting and Receiving signal waveform	107
4.4.5	Distance calculation and measurement	115
4.4.6	Distance Verification	116
4.4.7	Flexibility with other conductor size	118
4.4.8	Vibration testing	121
4.4.9	Sagging Testing	126
4.4.10	Coverage Observation	130
4.4.11	Image Capture	135

4.4.12 Video Recorded	137
-----------------------	-----

I. Video Test for the PVC Pipe	137
--------------------------------	-----

II. Video Test for the Nylon Rope	139
-----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER 5	CONCLUSION	141
------------------	-------------------	------------

5.1	Conclusion	141
-----	------------	-----

5.1.1	Structure Design for the CSR-BOT	141
-------	----------------------------------	-----

5.1.2	Movement Capability of the CSR-BOT	142
-------	---------------------------------------	-----

5.1.3	Testing of Prototypes	142
-------	-----------------------	-----

5.2	Recommendation for the CSR-BOT Improvement	146
-----	---	-----

REFERENCES	148
-------------------	------------

APPENDICES	150
-------------------	------------



LIST OF TABLES

2.1	AAAC type conductor bundle for National Grid Company's overhead line tower	11
2.2	Summary of previous research about mobile robot	20
2.3	Comparison between flying design robot, gripping design robot and wheel design robot	24
2.4	Advantages and disadvantages of types of gripper	25
3.1	The Details and Descriptions of CSR-BOT	32
3.2	Resistance value of six wires stepper motor	35
3.3	The address for each Xbee module	50
4.1	Table of device weight	99
4.2	Table of weight of each conductor cable according to type and size	100
4.3	The CSR-BOT range testing	105
4.4	Table of measurement value result of Channel 1 and Channel 2 for remote control	110
4.5	Table of measurement value result of Channel 1 and Channel 2 for robot	114

LIST OF FIGURES

1.1	An overhead transmission line of rated voltage level	2
1.2	A manually inspection for overhead transmission line done by lineman	2
2.1	Typical tower outlines	9
2.2	Corona ring attached on the insulator fittings	9
2.3	Vibration damper- type Stock Bridge damper	10
2.4	Example of the Maximum sag is measured at maximum load on hot day	12
2.5	Determination of swing angle on the basic of relative horizontal (wind) and vertical (system weight forces)	14
2.6	Illustration Method in determining the wind loading on conductor	15
2.7	Aeolian vibration on cable or circular cylinder	16
2.8	Damage caused by Aeolian vibration	17
2.9	Effect of corrosion occurred in aluminum conductors	18
2.10	Minimum life expectancy of core greased zebra	19
3.1	Research Framework	27
3.2	The steps for designing a CSR-BOT	28
3.3	The 3D model of the CSR-BOT	29
3.4	Top view of CSR-BOT (The center of gravity is designed to be at the center of the pulley)	30
3.5	Front view of the CSR-BOT	31
3.6	Side view of the CSR-BOT	31
3.7	Unipolar stepper motor	33
3.8	Specification of unipolar stepper motor	33
3.9	Six wires stepper motor wiring	34
3.10	Five wires stepper motor wiring	34

3.11	CSR-BOT system operation	37
3.12	Schematic diagram for remote control of the CSR-BOT	39
3.13	Remote Control Circuit board attachment according to their layers sequence	40
3.14	Side view of circuit board (Remote) attachment according to their layers sequence	41
3.15	Overall complete circuit attachment for remote control	41
3.16	Motor driver used for the robot	42
3.17	Schematic diagram for the robot	43
3.18	Circuit board attachment according to their layers sequence	44
3.19	Side view of circuit board for robot and its attachment according to their layers sequence	45
3.20	Complete circuit attachment for the CSR-BOT	45
3.21	Connect both Xbee module to PC / Laptop	46
3.22	Windows notification after successfully installing a device	47
3.23	Open the X-CTU software	47
3.24	Initialize the port for each Xbee Wireless module	48
3.25	Result of successful for each Xbee module are working fine	49
3.26	Setup address for each Xbee Wireless	50
3.27	Sucessful result of Xbee module could transmitt and revieve the signal between each other	51
3.28	Remote control programming procedures	53
3.29	CSR-BOT programming procedures	54
3.30	Pin configuration for the Xbee 1 module	55
3.31	Source code for Xbee 1 module to send “W” signal	56
3.32	Source code for Xbee 1 module to send “S” signal	56
3.33	Initialize pin for joystick	57
3.34	Result of on getting the integer values	58
3.35	Source code for joystick	58

3.36	Initialize pin for LCD display	59
3.37	Source code for LCD display to write the “Hello User!!..” phrase	59
3.38	Source code for LCD display to write the welcome note Phrase	60
3.39	Source code for LCD display to write the credit phrase	60
3.40	Source code if Xbee 2 module receiveing “S” signal	61
3.41	Source code if Xbee 2 module receiveing “W” signal	61
3.42	Initialize pin for the unipolar stepper motor	62
3.43	Source code for stepper motor to perform backward movement	63
3.44	Source code for stepper motor to perform forward movement	63
3.45	Recording and Image capturing programming procedures for CSR-BOT	65
3.46	Image Viewer programming procedures for CSR-BOT	66
3.47	GUI-Interface design layout by using Matlab 2011b software	67
3.48	Source code for preview webcam camera in YCbCr Mode	68
3.49	Source code for preview webcam camera in RGB Mode	69
3.50	Source code for preview webcam camera in Gray Scale Mode	69
3.51	Source code for recording a video from webcam camera	70
3.52	Source code for capturing an image from webcam camera	71
3.53	Image viewer design layout by using Matlab 2011b software	72
3.54	Source code for loading an image	73
3.55	Source code for flip the image 180°	74
3.56	Source code for flip the image in vertical	74
3.57	Source code for flip the image in horizontal	74
3.58	Source code convert the image in negative color mode	75
3.59	Source code convert the image into gray scale mode	75
3.60	Source code for increasing the brightness of the image	76
3.61	Source code for viewing the histogram graph of the image	76
4.1	Structure view of the CSR-BOT	78
4.2	LCD display show a “Hello User!!..” phrase	80
4.3	LCD display show a “Welcome To Cable Inspection Robot” phrase	80
4.4	LCD display show a “Creator: Ahmad Haniff” phrase	81

4.5	LCD display show a “Supervisor: Dr. Ramdon” phrase	81
4.6	LCD display show a “Forward” phrase and distance traveled by the robot	82
4.7	LCD display show a “Backward” phrase and the decrement of distance traveled by the robot	82
4.8	The CSR-BOT as hanging on the rope	83
4.9	The camera position attached to the CSR-BOT membrane	84
4.10	Operation button system for the CSR-BOT	85
4.11	All three webcam cameras preview in YCbCr camera mode	87
4.12	All three webcam cameras preview in RGB mode	88
4.13	All three webcam cameras preview in Gray scale mode	88
4.14	Warning dialog appears after capturing the image	89
4.15	The video recorded is save in .Avi file extension	89
4.16	The image captured is save in .Png file extension	90
4.17	The details about the GUI-Interface for the CSR-BOT program	90
4.18	Saving data dialog appears before exit the program	91
4.19	Closing dialog appears before exit the program	91
4.20	Load a selected image into the program	93
4.21	180° Rotation angle ability of the image by the Image Viewer program	93
4.22	Ability to flip the image horizontally by the Image Viewer program	94
4.23	Ability to flip the image vertically by the Image Viewer program	94
4.24	Ability to apply Negative color mode to the image by the Image Viewer program	95
4.25	Ability to apply gray scale color mode to the image by the Image Viewer program	95
4.26	Example of decreasing the brightness of the image by the Image Viewer program	96
4.27	Example of increasing the brightness of the image by the Image Viewer program	96
4.28	Ability to preview the histogram graph of the image by the Image Viewer program	97

4.29	Weight of the remote control	98
4.30	Weight of the CSR-BOT	99
4.31	Getting the holding torque value from the motor spec	101
4.32	The rope inclined at 10° angle	102
4.33	The graph of Efficiency (%) vs. Distance (m) for CSR-BOT	106
4.34	Setup connection for channel 1 and channel 2	107
4.35	Measurement value for Channel 2 (TX-pin of Xbee 1 module) waveform for remote control (part 1)	108
4.36	Measurement value for Channel 2 (TX-pin of Xbee 1 module) waveform for remote control (part 2)	109
4.37	Close-up of transmitting signal waveform for remote control (increasing the time base setting scale up to 500µs per division)	109
4.38	Measurement value for Channel 1 (RX-pin) waveform for remote control	110
4.39	Measurement value for Channel 1 (RX-pin of Xbee 2 module) waveform for robot (part 1)	112
4.40	Measurement value for Channel 1 (RX-pin of Xbee 2 module) waveform for robot (part 2)	112
4.41	Close-up of receiving signal waveform for robot (increasing the time base setting scale up to 500µs per division)	113
4.42	Measurement value for Channel 2 (TX-pin) waveform for robot	113
4.43	Starting point for the robot moving forward	117
4.44	Comparing the distance measurement result using a tape measure	117
4.45	The details about U-slope pulley spec and its attachment	118
4.46	U-slope pulley tested using Nylon rope	119
4.47	U-slope pulley tested using PVC pipe	120
4.48	Sequence image for vibration in vertical condition testing part 1 (blue line represents the reference line)	122
4.49	Sequence image for vibration in vertical condition testing part 2	123
4.50	Sequence image for vibration in horizontal condition testing (blue line represents the reference line)	124
4.51	Setup preparation for the test conductor cable sagging by 5 cm	126
4.52	Sequence of CSR-BOT movement on cable sagging by 5 cm	127
4.53	Preparation for the test conductor cable sagging by 12 cm	128

4.54	Sequence of CSR-BOT movement on cable sagging by 12 cm	129
4.55	Angular view of each webcam cameras	130
4.56	Example damage on PVC pipe	131
4.57	Live preview for PVC pipe in YCbCr mode	132
4.58	Live preview for PVC pipe in RGB mode	133
4.59	Live preview for PVC pipe in Gray scale mode	134
4.60	Image capture from each webcam camera for PVC pipe test	135
4.61	Image capture from each webcam camera for Nylon rope test (outdoor test)	135
4.62	Image capture from each webcam camera for Nylon rope test (indoor test)	136
4.63	Video recorded from Webcam camera 1 for PVC pipe	137
4.64	Video recorded from Webcam camera 2 for PVC pipe	138
4.65	Video recorded from Webcam camera 3 for PVC pipe	138
4.66	Video recorded from Webcam camera 1 for Nylon rope	139
4.67	Video recorded from Webcam camera 2 for Nylon rope	139
4.68	Video recorded from Webcam camera 3 for Nylon rope	140



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

q_z	Dynamic wind pressure
A_c	Wind loading area of the conductor
A_i	Wind loading area of the insulator
W_c	Total weight of the conductor
W_i	Total weight of the insulator
C_c	The drag coefficient factor
d_{cr}	The conductor diameter in meters
n_{cr}	The number of conductor bundles
L_1, L_2	Span of line erected on three towers in meter
Ω	The wind direction angle in degree with respect to the span line
a_i	Total area seen in side view
G_i	The drag factor
f_s	Vortex shedding frequency (Hz)
S	Strouhal number $0.185 \div 2$
V	Wind speed (m/s^{-1})
d	Diameter cable (m)

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGES
A	Dimension of the CSR-BOT	151
B	Data sheet for the unipolar stepper motor	152
C	Coding for remote control of the CSR-BOT	153
D	Coding for the CSR-BOT	159
E	Coding for GUI-Interface for the CSR-BOT	162
F	Coding for Image Viewer	179

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the research problem. It generally describes about methods currently used by the electricity provider company to monitor the high voltage cable. This chapter also highlights the problem statement based on the background provided as well as the objectives, limitations and significance of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

In this modern day, robot has replaced a lot of human job that may harmful to human life. There are common semi-automatic machine used by human to perform a difficult work where a person still needed to supervise the machine and decide about the task [1]. However, the use of robot to monitoring the condition of high voltage cable at the overhead transmission line such as shown in Figure 1.1 is not yet widespread.

Over several years, the overhead transmission line cable inspection has been done manually by experienced and well trained workers as shown in Figure 1.2. Recently, scientist and researcher are work together to plan-out a new method to substitute a worker with a robot to do the transmission line cable inspection. This method may save a lot of expenses from the electricity provider company and could reduce a risk of human life.



Figure 1.1: An overhead transmission line of rated voltage level [2]

The purpose of this inspection is done to monitor if there are any scratches, dust and rust of the cable. These problems may affect performance of the electrical current flow through the conductors (as detailing discusses in problem statement).

The disadvantage of using manpower is they may not monitor the situation accurately. In enhance the safeness of human life risk and improving the monitoring method, a wireless Camera Supervision Robot (CSR-BOT) for the cylindrical pipes and cables surfaces observation is purposed. This robot may improve on the quality of visual inspection practices commonly used this day and these technologies are targeted to include a GUI interface for collecting data from the wireless camera.



Figure 1.2: A manually inspection for overhead transmission line done by linesman [2]

This project is to develop a semi-automatic mobile robot that can move along through the overhead transmission line cable. The Camera Supervision Robot (CSR-BOT) is equipped with wireless camera supervision. This is to ensure that the handler could inspect the cable condition of the transmission line cable.

The data from wireless camera can be viewed directly from the computer. With a simple Graphical User Interface (GUI), the handler could record a video and captured the image during the inspection. Based on the data taken, cable maintenance can be easily done by the technician.

The important aspect should be considered during designing this robot is noise and interference produce when corona is discharging. This problem is occurred when if there are any scratches on the transmission line cable. During corona discharges, pulse of voltage and current will be created on the transmission line. The radio frequency noise also will be existed and it may interference the radio and television reception. Researcher found that sometimes the radio and television interference is not considered to be significantly influenced by transmission line coronas, it may cause by other things [3].

This aspect may cause a problem especially when handler wants to receive a data from wireless camera to a portable computer. In solving this problem, a proper shielding of the robot unit is essential in order to avoid noise problems receive from surrounding area.

1.3 Problem Statement

During a hot sunny season, transmission line can easily get scratch, dust and water may also affect the conductor's electrical performance [4]. This situation may produce creation of coronas. A corona will occur if there are any energy losses along the transmission line. The inspections for the transmission line are needed to prevent a variety of phenomenon.

After the construction is complete, all the transmission line need to be inspected before energizing the line.

Linesman will climb each structure of the transmission line to check the following conditions [5]:

1. Conductor condition
2. Conductor sag and clearance to ground, trees, and structures.
3. Insulator conditions.
4. Line hardware for roughness and tightness. Excess inhibitor found should be removed from conductors to prevent corona discharges.
5. Structure vibration and alignment.
6. Ground-wire connections and conditions.
7. Ground resistance at each structure.
8. Structure footings for washouts or damage.
9. Obstruction light operations for aircraft warning.

Once a year, the inspection for overhead high voltage transmission line needs to be done. For a decade, most of the leading Electricity Provider Company in the world has done an inspection for power transmission line manually. Several Workers (lineman) are employed to check the condition of the transmission line by on foot. But in some situation, workers will face a difficulty for travelling due to mountainous surface and wild animal attacks [6].

Sometimes, helicopter will be used to move one workers from one transmission line to others transmission line. This method is quite efficient and quicker. Unfortunately, this mission is quite costly and dangerous especially during a windy season. Another method is worker will using telescope to observe it from the ground [6].

Lineman may face with electromagnetic radiation which can minimize their health risk for a long term. Exposing to the AC fields too much can cause non-thermal cell damage or weaken the immune system. IEEE has set the safe exposure limit for ELF AC from power lines which may leads to cell damage at $100\text{mW}/\text{cm}^2$ [7].

A new method need to be planned-out to ensure the accuracy of inspection for overhead high voltage transmission line and can reduce a risk of human life.

1.4 Objective of the Study

The aim of this research is to inspect the cable and insulator condition for the overhead high voltage transmission line. This system application should improving nowadays inspection method that applied by the energy provider company. To achieve these aims, the main objective of this research is to design and access an inspection robot with wireless camera supervision through the capability of GUI interface.

The measurable objectives of the project are:

- i. To develop and design mechanical robot for inspecting a high voltage cable.
- ii. To monitor the high voltage cable by using mechanical robot and three webcam camera.
- iii. To test the performance of the Camera Supervision Robot (CSR-BOT).

1.5 Scope of the Project

The project is focus on to test the performance of the inspection robot with wireless camera supervision.

The scopes of the project are:

- i. Design the robot using SolidWork premium 2013 software. The joystick is used to navigate the movement of the robot. The robot is design to be less than 5kg.
- ii. The robot will be monitor using three webcam cameras. Model of the camera is Sensonic 6100.
- iii. The robot will observe the cable condition in GUI-Interface program created in Matlab 2011b software. The output result only will be save in image capture and video recorded.
- iv. The experiment been carried out to test the performance of the CSR-BOT as follows:
 - a) The robot is tested in range of 0 to 30 meter.
 - b) The robot will be tested on the Nylon rope (diameter size: 1 cm) and PVC pipe (diameter size: 2 cm).

- c) The robot is only been tested in a horizontal alignment of the subject (Nylon rope and PVC pipe).
- d) There is no obstacle along the testing subject during the experiment.
- e) The robot will be tested in two situations it is indoor and outdoor.

1.6 Thesis Structure

This chapter has highlighted the common methods currently used by the electricity provider company to monitor the high voltage cable and the difficulties encountered by their technician during the inspection. The chapter also explains summary about the significance of the inspection for the high voltage conductor cables and the purpose used of the Camera Supervision Robot (CSR-BOT) to assist in monitoring the conductor cables. The remainder of the thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 outlines the literature related to the high voltage transmission line. The finding is focusing on the cable conductor's physical aspect. This chapter also discusses some examples of design concept from the previous research that can be used to develop the CSR-BOT.

In **Chapter 3** describing the research method for hardware and programming part used for this project. Most of the contents is discussing about method on developing the CSR-BOT. The method for developing the CSR-BOT is divided in three phase which is mechanical part, electronic part and software part. Each of these part details are covered in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents some analysis that has been carried out to test the performance of the robot and the GUI-Interface program. Several experiments have been done to test out the performance of the robot such as movement test, range test, tested on different type of material (other than conductor cable), distance verification, vibration test and sagging test. In the GUI-Interface for CSR-BOT program part, the efficiency of this software to captured, recorded and save the file during the live view is been test out. All of the result and findings from the test were reported in this chapter.

Chapter 5 draws a conclusion and makes recommendation for future works. This chapter concludes the research finding in development of a wireless Camera Supervision Robot (CSR-BOT) for the cylindrical pipes and cables surfaces observation. The chapter also discusses any possible suggestions for the CSR-BOT and the GUI-Interface program for improvement.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature related to the high voltage transmission line. This chapter also looks into the related literature about mobile robot. A literature review is a stepping stone for current research. Any relevant ideas related to the research will help to provide better understanding towards achieving the improvement of current study.

2.2 Overhead Line Tower Types

In designing the overhead line tower, designer should consider about human safety aspects first before precede with their design. For designing the overhead line tower, there are many criteria should be concern about such as structural analysis, electrical clearance analysis, insulator design and effect of the conductor movement due to windy condition. The structure of the overhead line tower is more related to the concept of voltages and current uprating.

Steel lattice material is commonly chosen in making the overhead line tower. Wood or light steel is totally impractical material to be used in designing the tower because at the higher voltage levels it need to deal with high wind loads and ice loads during the winter season. In Figure 2.1, shows some examples of typical tower for single and double circuit configuration with single and double earth wires.

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